INFORMATION SHEET

Artificial Turf

Artificial grass lawn turf does not meet goals set forth by Valley Water's Landscape Rebate Program.

Through the Landscape Rebate Program, Valley Water promotes water conservation and encourages the installation of sustainable landscapes that enhance our local environment. As stewards of our entire watershed, we have designed our program to go beyond saving water. While **artificial turf** may require less water than natural turf, it does not meet the Landscape Rebate Program's sustainability goals and **will not qualify** for the following reasons:

Artificial turf is not a living landscape and does not:

- Increase biodiversity of plant, animal and insect populations.
- Provide habitat for local fauna.
- Foster healthy soils, which increase moisture-holding capacity, support healthy microbes/insects and improve water quality.
- Sequester carbon or produce oxygen like living plants.

Artificial turf has potential environmental concerns:

- Runoff from artificial turf may contain heavy metals, chemicals and other pollutants that can reach surface water or groundwater and potentially harm wildlife.
- Artificial turf, a plastic product, has a relatively short lifespan of approximately 10 to 20 years and may eventually end up in landfills.
- Artificial turf can get significantly hotter than surrounding air temperatures, contributing to the urban heat island effect by increasing air temperatures in urban settings.

Artificial turf is not water free:

- It must be cleaned periodically with water and sometimes harsher chemicals.
- Artificial turf used as playing fields in direct sunlight can reach temperatures over 160° F may require frequent, heavy irrigation to cool it down.

Artificial Turf has potential health and safety concerns:

- The temperature of artificial turf playing fields on hot sunny days averages over 140° F, making heat-related injuries such as burns and heat illnesses a risk.
- Heat safety concerns may limit playing field usage to cooler early mornings and evenings to avoid peak-high temperatures.
- Studies show an increased rate of injury on artificial turf playing fields compared to natural turf playing fields.

Transformed native garden of a Landscape Rebate Program recipient in San Jose's Alum Rock neighborhood.

Fortunately, the Landscape Rebate Program allows for many beautiful, low water using options that result in sustainable and beneficial landscapes. For additional information about the program or our extensive Qualifying Plant List, please call the Water Conservation Hotline at **408-630-2554** or visit ***watersavings.org***.

Transformed native garden of a Landscape Rebate Program recipient in San Jose's Willow Glen neighborhood.

Sources

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Questions?

Please contact via email at ***conservation@valleywater.org*** or by calling **408-630-2554**.

CONTACT US

To find out the latest information on Valley Water projects or to submit questions or comments, use our **Access Valley Water** customer request system at ***access.valleywater.org***.

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